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CIA's top aide defends U.S. need for secrecy in intelligence activities

By John Gorman

THE UNITED STATES may have to conduct its affairs in a "fishbowl" as a result of congressional investigations of the Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA deputy director predicted here Saturday night.

Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters, number two man at the CIA, said that if any country could function in the "fishbowl" conditions, the U.S. would be the first to do so.

Speaking to an enthusiastic audience of more than 200 persons at the National Counter Intelligence Corps Association dinner in the Sheraton-Chicago Hotel, Walters warned the former World War II intelligence officers that the "wreckers are getting ready to dismantle the intelligence service again."

"We're told today that it is un-American to have things secret," he said.

TO COMBAT this notion, Walters quoted George Washington, who told a subordinate in a letter that the "need for procuring good intelligence is so obvious" that it need hardly be mentioned.

While ambassador to France, Benjamin Franklin ran a printing press for-

ing passports, Walters reminded the crowd.

Walters defended the CIA as a reflection of the American people, made up of average Americans. He said that the CIA conception of what is right and wrong reflects the attitudes of the citizens. If that conception changes, he said, "we are perfectly willing to change also."

DEFENDING THE CIA's recently disclosed role in the 1953 suicide of a civilian Army employe who had been given LSD, Walters recalled the public sentiment at the time.

"It was a time when fighting men for the first time in history were refusing to come back home from the Korean War. [Josef] Cardinal Mindszenty appeared hollow-eyed and confessed. The feeling at the time was that this had been done with drugs. We were convinced the other side was using mind-controlling drugs," Walters said.

There is a current popular idea that "we must throw everything out and thus be cleansed. But if we do this, we may well be cleaned out. This idea is insanity insofar as the safety of the United States is concerned," he said.

MORI/CDF